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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 BRUSSELS 000044

SIPDIS

DOL FOR BLS AND ILAB

TREASURY FOR IMI

STATE FOR DRL/IL

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [ELAB](#) [EUN](#)

SUBJECT: EU UNEMPLOYMENT UP TO 9.5 PERCENT; EURO ZONE RATE REACHES 10.0 PERCENT

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¶1. SUMMARY. The latest unemployment data released by the EU Commission's Statistical Office (EUROSTAT) on January 8 brought more bad news concerning the situation of the EU labor markets with no sign that the widespread pattern of increases in jobless figures might be coming to a halt. The aggregate unemployment rate for the EU-27 increased to 9.5 percent in November 2009, up from 9.3 percent in October. Unemployment in the euro zone (the 16 EU countries currently participating in the euro) reached the symbolic 10.0 percent mark in November 2009. END SUMMARY.

¶2. With seasonal adjustment and compensation for differences in national statistical methods, the unemployment rate for the EU-27 stood at 9.5 percent in November 2009, up from 9.4 percent in October 2009 (revised from initial 9.3 estimate) and from 7.5 percent in November 2008. The unemployment rate for the euro zone stood at 10.0 percent in November 2009, up from 9.9 percent in October 2009 (revised from initial 9.8 estimate) and up from 8.0 percent in November 2008 (comparison based on EU-16; euro zone membership effective in November 2009).

¶3. The lowest monthly rates among those compiled by EUROSTAT from the EU-27 for November 2009 were recorded in the Netherlands (3.9 percent) and Austria (5.5 percent). The highest rates were recorded in Latvia (22.3 percent) and Spain (19.4 percent).

¶4. EUROSTAT data showed all countries among the EU-27 recording an increase in their unemployment rate over a year, some showing quite a sharp rise. The smallest increases took place in Germany (from 7.1 percent in November 2008 to 7.6 percent in November 2009), Luxembourg (from 5.2 percent in November 2008 to 6.0 percent in November 2009) and Malta (from 6.2 percent to 7.0 percent). The sharpest yearly increases occurred in Latvia (from 10.2 percent in November 2008 to 22.3 percent in November 2009), Estonia (from 6.5 percent to 15.2 percent between the third quarters of 2008 and 2009) and Lithuania (from 6.4 percent to 14.6 percent between the third quarters of 2008 and 2009).

¶5. Based on EUROSTAT estimates, male unemployment reached 9.7 percent in November 2009 for the EU-27 and 9.9 percent for the euro zone, up 2.5 percentage point and 2.4 percentage point respectively when compared to November 2008. The female unemployment rate for November 2009 reached 9.2 percent for the EU-27 and 10.0 percent for the euro zone, up 1.4 percentage point for both areas over the twelve-month period.

¶6. Unemployment rates among young people under 25 for November 2009 ranged from 7.5 percent in the Netherlands to 43.8 percent in Spain. The November 2009 rate for this age group was estimated at 21.4 percent for the EU-27 and at 21.0 percent for the euro zone, compared to 16.6 percent for both areas in November 2008 (plus 4.8

percentage point and 4.4 percent respectively).

¶7. EUROSTAT estimated that 22.899 million were unemployed in the EU-27 in November 2009, of which 15.712 million reside in the euro zone. In absolute numbers, the number of unemployed increased by 4,978,000 for the EU-27 and by 3,041,000 for the euro zone over the twelve-month period.

¶8. Following is the breakdown of unemployment rates in ascending order for the individual EU member states:

(Seasonally-adjusted)

(November 2009 rates unless otherwise indicated)

Netherlands	3.9
Austria	5.5
Luxembourg	6.0
Cyprus	6.2
Slovenia	6.8
Malta	7.0
Denmark	7.2
Romania	7.2 (third quarter 2009)
Germany	7.6
Bulgaria	7.8
Czech Republic	7.9
UK	7.9 (September 2009)
Belgium	8.1
Italy	8.3
Poland	8.8
Finland	8.9
Sweden	8.9
Greece	9.7 (third quarter 2009)
France	10.0
Portugal	10.3

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Hungary	10.8
Ireland	12.9
Slovakia	13.6
Lithuania	14.6 (third quarter 2009)
Estonia	15.2 (third quarter 2009)
Spain	19.4
Latvia	22.3

EU-27 9.5

Euro zone 10.0

¶9. The monthly rates and numbers of unemployed are estimated and based on data from the EU labor force survey. The estimated rates may differ from national unemployment rates due to differences in methods and definitions of unemployment. Unemployed people according to ILO criteria are those aged 15 and over who:

-- Are without work;

-- Are available to start work within the next two weeks; and

-- Have actively sought employment at some time during the previous four weeks.

KENNARD